

**ABC STORES**

766 Pohukaina Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813-5391
www.abcstores.com

Telephone: (808) 591-2550
Fax: (808) 591-2039
E-mail: mail@abcstores.com

CITY COUNCIL CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
ERNEST Y. MARTIN, CHAIR & PRESIDING OFFICER
IKAICA ANDERSON, VICE CHAIR
ROMY M. CACHOLA, FLOOR LEADER
COUNCILMEMBER TOM BERG
COUNCILMEMBER STANLEY CHANG
COUNCILMEMBER TULSI GABBARD
COUNCILMEMBER NESTOR R. GARCIA
COUNCILMEMBER BREENE HARIMOTO
COUNCILMEMBER ANN H. KOBAYASHI

RECEIVED
MAR 20 3 37 PM '12
CITY CLERK
HONOLULU, HAWAII

DATE: Wednesday, March 21, 2012
TIME: 2:00pm
City Council Chamber

RE: Bill 10 Relating to the Use of Bags Provided to Customers.

Dear Chair Martin, Vice Chair Anderson and Councilmembers:

ABC Stores is a local retail chain with 40+ stores located on Oahu, and on the neighbor islands.

ABC Stores OPPOSES Bill 10 relating to the use of bags provided to customers.

Hawaii's retailers unquestionably support initiatives to preserve and protect our environment. The solution to the plastic bag issue is neither a total ban nor questionable substitutes, but the wise management of this resource, i.e., the "reduce, reuse and recycle" principle. We absolutely support the broadest use of reusable tote bags as the ultimate solution. However, we do know that consumers' acceptance and use of these bags will not be universal or practical at all times. Non-grocery retailers: garden and hardware, drycleaners, apparel stores and restaurants provide plastic carry bags of various sizes that are the most appropriate and effective bags for their products.

Retailers are in the business of providing goods to consumers and must provide a vehicle for customers to transport their purchases out of the store. Businesses in both Maui County and Kauai County which have banned plastic checkout bags, have switched to paper bags, which have higher cost and serious negative environmental implications

Paper bags are up to ten times more expensive than plastic, in actual purchase price and in increased shipping costs to Hawaii. For every one truck that delivers plastic bags, seven trucks are needed to deliver the same number of paper bags; this volume measure is critical for ocean freight. These costs will be passed on to the consumer.

Additionally, there are serious environmental impacts of air and water pollution and green house gas emissions with the proposed alternatives. From the ULS Report (<http://use-less-stuff.com/research.htm>): paper bags generate 70% more air and 50 times more water pollutants than plastic bags.

The PLASTIC BAGS provided to consumers at point of sale are RECYCLABLE. Our retailers already encourage recycling by providing bins at stores and shipping the collected plastic bags to the mainland for recycling.

The PLASTIC BAGS provided to consumers at point of sale are REUSABLE. Consumers reuse plastic grocery bags for a multitude of tasks: cleaning up after pets, lining waste baskets, packing shoes and other items when traveling. Not having these bags provided by retailers, consumers will resort to purchasing plastic bags. This will not necessarily reduce the amount of plastic in the environment.

We respectfully ask your consideration of the approach currently moving in the legislature (SB2511, SD2, HD2) that essentially levies a 10-cent fee on single-use bags, with the goals of reducing the environmental impact of both paper and plastic AND creating a dedicated source of funding for watershed protection, restoration and reacquisition. This position is a practical and manageable option to an outright ban on plastic bags and places the responsibility for the careless discard and misuse, or the wise re-use and management, of these items on the consumer. Hawaii's retailers unquestionably support the broadest use of reusable tote bags as the ultimate solution for the environment.

However, we do know that consumers' acceptance and use of reusable bags will not be universal or practical at all times. Our mutual goals are to maximize the usage of reusable bags, to provide plastic bags to consumers for their personal, practical uses, and to recycle the excess bags, without over-burdening our residents.

Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

Respectfully Submitted,

PAUL KOSASA
President & CEO